

REMARKS

Claim 1 has been amended to more clearly recite the structure of the roll. Support for amended Claim 1 can be found at, for example, Fig. 1(a). Entry of this Amendment is respectfully requested. Claims 1-4 and 6-12 are pending.

Response to Claim Rejections Under § 112

A. Claims 1 and 6-12 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as assertedly failing to comply with the written description requirement.

B. Claims 1 and 6-12 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as assertedly being indefinite.

Claim 1 has been amended to more clearly recite the structure of the roll, thereby meeting all of the requirements of §112 first and second paragraphs. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

Response to Claim Rejections Under § 103

Claims 1 and 7-12 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,589,048 to Kass et al. in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0164475 to Imamura et al., JP 2002286397 to Hamayoshi and U.S. Patent No. 5,649,891 to Kass et al. Applicants respectfully traverse.

The presently claimed invention is directed to a roll for use in a galvanizing pot, comprising a hollow body, and shaft portions connected to said body, said body being made of a silicon nitride ceramic having thermal conductivity of 50 W/(m·K) or more at room temperature, said body having an average surface roughness Ra of 1-20 µm, and said shaft portions being

made of ceramics, wherein an inner surface of said body comprises large-diameter regions on both ends and a small-diameter region in between the large diameter regions, and each of said shaft portions is an integral hollow cylinder having a small-diameter portion, a large-diameter portion and a flange connecting said small-diameter portion and said large-diameter portion, said small-diameter portion and said large-diameter portion of each of said shaft portions have approximately the same thickness, and the large-diameter region of said body is connected to the large-diameter portion of said shaft portion.

None of Kass '048, Imamura, JP '397 or Kass '891 discloses or suggests a roll comprising a hollow body, wherein the inner surface of the body comprises large-diameter regions on both ends and a small-diameter region in between the large diameter regions, as claimed.

Thus, Kass '048, Imamura, JP '397 and Kass '891 fail to render obvious the present claims. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

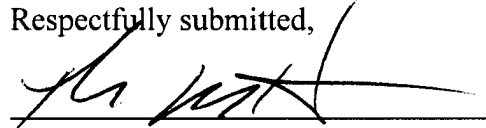
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